



ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

CONNECTICUT STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

for Administering the

Smarter Balanced Assessments

Connecticut Alternate Assessments (CTAA)

Connecticut SAT School Day

Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT)-Science

Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT)-Science

Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) SKILLS CHECKLIST-Science

Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT)
SKILLS CHECKLIST-Science

Bureau of Student Assessment - 2016-17



- Students Who Receive Special Education Services
- Students Identified as Disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Students Identified as English Learners
- Students Receiving Designated Supports

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INTRODUCTION

This document includes revisions through August 2016 and is intended to provide guidance for Connecticut school district personnel who must make decisions about testing special student populations on the Smarter Balanced Assessments, Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) Science, the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) Science, Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) Skills Checklist Science, the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) Skills Checklist Science, and the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA). These special student populations include students identified as eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), students identified as disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and students who are identified as English Learners (EL). This decision making also includes general education students who may require additional supports.

If after reviewing this document you have questions about the special student populations, the criteria for participation in various assessment options or allowable supports or accommodations, please contact the Bureau of Student Assessment at 860-713-6837 or 860-713-6855.

In addition to this document, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) continues to prepare teachers to administer the Smarter Balanced Assessments for English language arts/literacy and mathematics to all students in Grades 3-8. One component of the Smarter Balanced Assessment system includes understanding, selecting and providing access to the assessment. To assist administrators and all teachers working with general education students, students with disabilities and students who are English Learners, we have created two methods to access optional professional learning opportunities for these topics. These links will provide you with more information:

[LIVE-2016-17 CSDE Smarter Balanced Usability, Accessibility & Accommodations Training](#)

[ONLINE-2016-17 CSDE Smarter Balanced Usability, Accessibility & Accommodations Training](#)

I. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE: EXPECT STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES TO ACHIEVE GRADE-LEVEL ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS

Federal legislation, the Every Student Succeeds Act signed in 2015 reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). This act reaffirms and requires that each state institute challenging content and performance standards for its public school students. These performance standards establish the level at which students are expected to master the material included in the state's content standards. The ESEA requires that all states have quality assessments established in reading, mathematics and science to determine the extent to which students have mastered the material outlined in the state's content standards. This requirement addresses a key element of the Title I program, i.e., a high-quality assessment system that is aligned with a state's content and performance standards to ensure that all students are held to the same high academic standards.

Connecticut has long advocated that, to the extent possible, students with disabilities should participate in both the general education curriculum and the standard administration of the state assessments; this has often not been the case nationally. It was only with the Public Law 105-17, 1997 reauthorization of IDEA that having high expectations for students with disabilities became a national priority. The 1997 IDEA amendments required that these students be included in appropriately challenging curriculums and in districtwide and statewide assessments, and that states and school districts publicly account for the progress of these students. Clearly, two goals of IDEA are: 1) the participation of a high percentage of students with disabilities in standard districtwide and statewide testing and related accountability efforts, and 2) the availability of an alternate assessment for those few students who cannot appropriately participate in the standard assessment program.

Federal legislation, in the form of both ESEA and the IDEA, and state legislation in the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-14, and relatively recent implementation of the Connecticut Core Standards is consistent in the vision that is being promoted, i.e., high expectations, uniform standards and public accountability for the performance of all students, including those with disabilities and limited English proficiency. Connecticut's statewide assessment program is just one component of an overall accountability system that is intended to assess the effectiveness of Connecticut schools and lead to greater success for all students.

To understand this educational accountability system, one must consider the progress of all students on a number of key indicators. For more information, the publication [*The Condition of Education in Connecticut*](#) is available for download.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE CONNECTICUT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

A. SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

In the 2014-15 school year, Connecticut as a member of the [Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium](#), administered assessments for English language arts/literacy and mathematics to students in Grades 3-8 and 11, with the exception of special education students with significant cognitive disabilities participating in Connecticut's Alternate Assessments. The Smarter Balanced assessment system was developed by the member states of the Consortium, including Connecticut, to align to the Common Core State Standards. In the 2016-17 school year the Smarter Balanced Assessments will again be provided to students in Grades 3-8. (Beginning in the 2016-17 year students in Grade 11 were assessed with the Connecticut SAT School Day.)

Additionally, it is important to understand the Smarter Balanced summative test design and the activities associated with the test-taking situation. The Smarter Balanced summative assessment for English language arts/literacy and mathematics requires students to:

- participate in an online assessment comprised of two components, a computer adaptive test (CAT) for both ELA and math and a performance task for the math content area. The tests are not timed, however, recommended test session lengths of 40 to 120 minutes, depending upon content area and grade level, is provided in the Test Administration Manual;
- demonstrate critical-thinking and problem-solving skills; and
- accurately respond to various item response types using a keyboard and mouse or touchpad.

B. CONNECTICUT SAT SCHOOL DAY

On October 7, 2015, the Connecticut State Board of Education adopted the SAT (created by the College Board) as the annual state assessment for eleventh graders in Connecticut. All students in Connecticut must be tested once in high school for English language arts/literacy and mathematics using the same assessment for all students. This is a requirement of federal and state law. By adopting the SAT, Connecticut is eliminating duplicate testing and eleventh grade students in Connecticut will have an opportunity to take the SAT free of charge during the school day. The SAT assesses the critical thinking skills students need for academic success. Supports are available for students with special needs, as determined by an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a Section 504 plan. There are also accommodations for students

who are English Learners (ELs). Many students will be able to use their SAT scores for both the state school accountability system, as well as college admission. Eligible students in Grade 11 with significant cognitive disabilities will be assessed with the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA). Additional Information regarding supports and accommodations for the Connecticut SAT School Day may be accessed [here](#).

C. CONNECTICUT MASTERY TEST (CMT) - SCIENCE

Beginning with the March 2008 test administration, the CMT Science was added to assessments for Grades 5 and 8. Content of the criterion-referenced CMT Science represents the most essential science skills at each grade level tested and is aligned with the [Core Science Curriculum Framework](#).

Additionally, it is important to understand the CMT Science test design and the activities associated with the test-taking situation. The CMT Science requires students to:

- participate in up to a 70-minute testing session;
- follow multiple-step directions as presented by the test examiner; and
- accurately respond to various items using a keyboard and mouse or touchpad.

For a more comprehensive explanation of the test design and content, refer to the [Fourth Generation Science Handbook and Science Test Format](#).

D. CONNECTICUT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE TEST (CAPT) - SCIENCE

The Second Generation CAPT was administered for the first time in the spring of 2001 assessing and reporting on student performance in Science. A third generation of the CAPT was first introduced in 2007. This third generation is aligned with the [Core Science Curriculum Framework](#).

Science Test results from Grades 10 become part of the students' permanent school records and are reported on their official school transcripts. Thus, graduation requirements must be defined and addressed when making testing decisions and reviewing scores.

Students who do not participate in the standard grade-level version of the CAPT Science will need to review graduation requirements since there may be important consequences for employment or postsecondary educational opportunities. Parents and students should be fully informed by the IEP team of the possible consequences of failing to participate in the standard CAPT Science when the IEP team recommends testing with the CAPT Skills Checklist Science.

Understanding a student's ability to manage the activities associated with the test-taking situation is as important as understanding test content. The CAPT Science requires students to:

- participate in two testing sessions of 50 minutes each, with a break of at least 15 minutes between test sessions;
- follow multiple-step directions as presented by the test examiner; and
- accurately respond to various item response types using a keyboard and mouse or touchpad.

For a more comprehensive explanation of the test design and content, refer to [CAPT Third Generation Handbook for Science](#).

E. CONNECTICUT ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

For a small group of students with significant cognitive disabilities who meet the eligibility criteria, Connecticut provides an alternate assessment. This alternate assessment system includes the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) and the CMT Skills Checklist Science or the CAPT Skills Checklist Science.

Connecticut Alternate Assessments (CTAA)

The Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) is designed exclusively for special education students with significant cognitive disabilities. Students are determined eligible on an individual basis by the student's Planning and Placement Team (PPT). This alternate assessment includes English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics (MA) and is available for students in Grades 3-8 and 11. This assessment is presented to each student individually by CSDE trained teachers via a computer platform. The CTAA including the supporting resources was developed with Connecticut teachers and administrators working closely with other national state members and experts in the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC). More information and resources about NCSC can be found at <http://www.ncscpartners.org/>. More information about the CTAA can be found on the Connecticut Student Assessment Webpage. Teachers and parents with students are encouraged to access the CTAA practice site to become familiar with the online environment and the accessibility features available.

CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science

The CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science is an alternate assessment available for students in Grades 5, 8 and 10. Like the CTAA, it is designed exclusively for special education students with significant cognitive disabilities. Only identified special education students meeting specific eligibility criteria may participate in this alternate assessment and only if determined on an individual basis by the student's Planning and Placement Team (PPT).

The purpose of the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science is to provide an accountability measure to determine the extent to which students with significant cognitive disabilities have been given the opportunity to participate in and benefit from the general education science curriculum. The CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science has been designed to align with the skills and objectives outlined in the [Core Science Curriculum Framework](#) for Grades 5, 8 and 10. Each indicator on

the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science corresponds to a content standard and expected performance statement found in the curriculum frameworks. Each indicator reflects a downward extension of the grade-level skill that allows it to be more accessible to students with significant cognitive disabilities.

Copies of each grade-level CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science are available on the CSDE Web site at: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2748&q=334732>.

F. ENGLISH PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

LAS Links Assessment

Historically, Connecticut's students identified as English Learners (ELs) have participated in statewide assessments with designated supports or accommodations if needed. These students acquiring English as a second language are required to meet the same academic performance standards expected of students whose first language is English. In addition to statewide assessment participation in Grades 3-8 and 11 (and Science in Grades 5, 8, and 10), all ELs must annually participate in the standardized English language proficiency assessment. Connecticut ELs are assessed using the LAS Links test to demonstrate their level of English language proficiency. ELs must meet mandated exit requirements on the LAS Links assessment to exit bilingual and/or ESOL programs.

G. NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), is often called the "Nation's Report Card." It is the only measure of student achievement in the United States that allows for the comparison of Connecticut students to their peers in all other states. NAEP, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, has been conducted since 1969 and produces results that are widely reported by the national and local media.

Every year, some Connecticut schools are selected to participate in the NAEP. For each NAEP administration, representative samples of fourth, eighth and twelfth-graders in states and territories of the United States are tested in selected content areas. In odd-numbered years (e.g., 2015, 2017), the number of participating schools increases and the results are used to assess achievement for the state as a whole. Since it is critical that participants accurately represent Connecticut's public school population, students with disabilities and English learners must be included in the testing.

School personnel are expected to make every effort to include all selected students with disabilities and English learners in the assessments. Many of the universal tools and embedded and non-embedded accommodations available for the Smarter Balanced assessments and CMT and CAPT Science are also available for the NAEP. As school personnel make specific decisions regarding how to include students in NAEP, there are several important factors to consider:

- NAEP does not produce scores for individual students and participation is anonymous;
- The NAEP assessments do not impose any consequences for students, teachers, schools, or districts and are intended solely to provide an overall measure of educational achievement for the nation and individual states;
- Participating students are not required to complete the entire test and may skip any test question. Even when a student does not complete the entire test, valuable information is obtained from the responses provided; and
- Schools send a notification letter home to families of selected students. The letter explains the importance of NAEP and lets parents know that they may decide that their child will not participate.

Annually, Connecticut's NAEP State Coordinator provides the schools selected to participate in the NAEP with detailed information about available accommodations specific to the assessments that will be administered. Currently, NAEP is in the final stages of transitioning from a paper-based assessment to a digitally-based assessment using NAEP-provided tablets. In 2016-17, most students selected for NAEP will be assessed using a tablet, but a small group of students will be assessed using paper forms. Specific questions concerning NAEP accommodations should be directed to Renée Savoie, NAEP State Coordinator, at 860-713-6858.

III. WHO SHOULD BE TESTED?

A. UNDERLYING INTENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE MANDATES AND POLICY DIRECTIVES

All Connecticut public school students should be assessed in accordance with federal and state regulations. Students must be tested by the district when students are included in the Public School Information System (PSIS) collection, and the district assumes fiscal responsibility for that student as shown by documenting at least some local costs, including eligible in-kind services, for the student's education and the student is enrolled to the extent the district is responsible for educational placement and record keeping. These rules apply to students taking the Smarter Balanced Assessment, the CTAA, the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science, the CMT/CAPT Science test, and the Connecticut SAT School Day.

Students who are identified as special education, students who are identified as Section 504, English learners, recently arrived English learners and students identified as Free and Reduced Lunch must also be recorded in the TIDE system during the testing window.

The following chart applies to all statewide testing.

Student Circumstance	Testing Policy
Students entered into PSIS who are enrolled in state Approved Private Special Education Programs (APSEP)	Connecticut public school students who are enrolled in an APSEP are tested by the APSEP.
Students entered into PSIS who are enrolled in Non-Approved Private Schools in Connecticut or Out of State Schools	The reporting district is accountable to test these students. More information is forthcoming on how these students will be tested in Connecticut's Assessment System.
Students who move to another Connecticut public school in the same district or move to another Connecticut district during testing	Students who move to another Connecticut public school in the same district or move to another Connecticut district will have their tests follow them in TIDE upon the Public School Information System (PSIS) being updated. <i>For the Connecticut SAT School Day, students who did not take their test in the previous school, must take the test in their new school.</i>
Students who move to a private school or to an out-of-state school during testing and are exited from PSIS	Students who move to a private school or to an out-of-state school should be noted in PSIS as transferring from the Connecticut public school system. These students are not tested.

Student Circumstance	Testing Policy
Students hospitalized or homebound due to illness	Students who are hospitalized or homebound due to illness should be tested unless there are medical constraints that prevent them from testing (the student has received an approved medical exemption). <i>Connecticut SAT School Day students must be tested at the school district's central administration offices by a certified school staff member who is fully trained in the proper test administration and security procedures.</i>
Students on homebound instruction due to suspension or expulsion	Students who are receiving homebound instruction due to a suspension or expulsion must be tested either at home or preferably at the school district's central administrative offices by a certified school staff member who is fully trained in the proper test administration and security procedures. <i>Connecticut SAT School Day students must be tested at the school district's central administration offices by a certified school staff member who is fully trained in the proper test administration and security procedures.</i>
Students who may qualify for a medical exemption	Requests for consideration of an Emergency Medical Exemption should be initiated by the District Administrator (DA) for Assessment or the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Coordinator for the Connecticut SAT School day as needed during the appropriate test administration window. See Appendix A.
Home-schooled students	Home-schooled students are not public school students and are not eligible to be administered state assessments.
Students who are newly enrolled in a Connecticut public school after the district testing window has commenced	Students who are newly enrolled in a Connecticut public school after the first day of testing are required to be administered the state assessments. <i>Connecticut SAT School Day students who arrive after April 5, 2017, (Primary Test Date) will take it on the makeup dates: April 25 or 26, 2017.</i>
Student was enrolled as a Grade 9, 10, or 11 student at the beginning of the year and is a Grade 12 student during testing window NOTE: <i>This rule only applies to Connecticut SAT School Day testers and CTAA students.</i>	The district must determine when the student is closest to being a Grade 11 student and test in that year. A public high school student may not skip mandatory Connecticut SAT School Day or CTAA in Grade 11.
Student was enrolled as a Grade 9 student at beginning of the year and is a Grade 11 student during testing window NOTE: <i>This rule only applies to student taking the CAPT Science Test, including the CAPT Skills Checklist Science.</i>	The district must determine when the student is closest to being a Grade 10 student and test in that year. A public high school student may not skip mandatory CAPT Science or CAPT Skills Checklist Science testing.

IV. GRADE LEVEL CONSIDERATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN SMARTER BALANCED SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS, CONNECTICUT ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS AND CMT/CAPT SCIENCE

For purposes of Connecticut's statewide testing program, there are no ungraded school programs. Each student must be enrolled in a specific grade or assigned to a specific grade based on his or her age. This grade assignment should be specified in the Public School Information System (PSIS). Students in Grades 3-8 comprise the eligible population for participation in the Smarter Balanced summative assessments and Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) testing. In addition, students in Grades 5 and 8 participate in the CMT Science test or CMT Skills Checklist Science. In Grade 10, students will ONLY participate in the CAPT Science test or CAPT Skills Checklist Science. Students in Grade 11 will participate in the Connecticut SAT School Day or the Connecticut Alternate Assessment in English Language arts/literacy and mathematics. If there is any question as to the grade level for a particular student, district administrators are advised to verify how the student was reported in the PSIS and in the Special Education Data Application and Collection (SEDAC). Districts and private approved special education programs are advised to work closely on the identification of students in the testing grades to avoid testing students in the wrong grade or not testing students in a required grade.

Students enrolled in high school present additional issues for consideration beyond age and years in school. Each local school district establishes its own policy for the determination of grade levels. Many high schools establish grade levels based on the accumulation of earned credits. However, this system and/or its timing must not result in a student not being tested. For example, based on earned credits, a student may be in Grade 9 one year and in Grade 11 by the following administration of the CAPT Science, thus skipping Grade 10 altogether. In this instance, the student must participate in the Grade 10 CAPT Science at the most logical time (e.g., in the year following his or her Grade 9 year).

V. GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION IN AN ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

A. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

In a commentary to the proposed Federal Regulations (*Federal Register*, October 1997, p. 55055), the United States Department of Education estimated that approximately 1 to 2 percent of the total school population would require an alternate assessment. This translates into an expectation that the vast majority of special education students will participate in the standard grade-level version of statewide tests.

Section 602 (3) of IDEA '97 required states to create an alternative assessment that was aligned with their academic content standards, promoted access to the general curriculum and reflected professional judgment of the highest achievement standards possible. In 2007, the Connecticut State Department of Education implemented the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science for students with significant cognitive disabilities and for whom a standard statewide assessment was not appropriate. This assessment was intended to be used with approximately 1 percent of the total population. Since then, the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science aims at providing an accurate picture of student achievement in Science. The Skills Checklist Science is a working document that teachers complete throughout the school year. The document is used to assist in planning instruction, monitoring student growth and progress and documenting achievement. Teachers rate students on grade-level academic skills and submit results for state/federal reporting purposes during the CMT/CAPT testing window.

In addition to our alternate assessment for science, Connecticut has developed the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA). Connecticut was a member of the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) consortium to develop this alternate assessment. Similar to the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, NCSC also developed a system of valid, reliable and fair next-generation assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards in English language arts/literacy (ELA/literacy) and mathematics for Grades 3-8 and 11 for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Thus, this new alternate assessment is the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) and replaced the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist in English language arts and mathematics beginning in 2015.

B. NATIONAL CENTER AND STATE COLLABORATIVE

The National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) applied the lessons learned from the past decade of research on alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards (AA-AAS) to develop a multi-state comprehensive assessment system for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The long-term goal of the NCSC project was to ensure that students with significant cognitive disabilities achieve increasingly higher academic outcomes and leave high school ready for post-secondary options. A well-designed summative assessment alone is insufficient to achieve that goal. All partners shared the commitment to the research-to-

practice focus of the project and the development of a comprehensive model of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and supportive professional development. These supports are intended to improve the alignment of the entire system and strengthen the validity of inferences of the system of assessments. More Information and resources are available at the [NCSC Wiki](#).

C. CONNECTICUT ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT (CTAA) AND CMT/CAPT SKILLS CHECKLIST SCIENCE ELIGIBILITY AND LEARNER CHARACTERISTICS INVENTORY

CTAA and CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science Eligibility & Learner Characteristics Inventory

The criteria for participation in the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA), Grades 3-8 and 11 and CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science, Grades 5, 8, and 10 reflect the **pervasive** nature of a significant cognitive disability. All content areas should be considered when determining eligibility for these assessments. Thus, an eligible student who participates in the CTAA participates in this assessment and the CMT Skills Checklist Science for Grades 5 and 8. Students requiring an alternate assessment in Grade 10 participate in only the CAPT Skills Checklist Science. If the PPT team does not respond in the affirmative to all 3 Criteria Descriptors then the student would participate in the standard Smarter Balanced assessment and/or the CMT/CAPT Science test.

In addition, evidence used for considering participation in the CTAA or CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science is **not** based on:

1. A disability category or label;
2. Poor attendance or extended absences;
3. Native language/social/cultural or economic difference;
4. Expected poor performance on the general education assessment;
5. Academic and other services which student receives;
6. Educational environment or instructional setting;
7. Percent of time receiving special education;
8. English learner (EL) status;
9. Low reading level/achievement level;
10. Anticipated student's disruptive behavior;
11. Impact of student scores on accountability system;
12. Administrator decision;
13. Anticipated emotional duress; or
14. Need for accommodations (e.g., assistive technology/AAC) to participate in assessment process.

**Participation Requirements for Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) and
CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science (all responses must be indicated as Yes)**

Participation Criteria	Participation Criteria Descriptors	Agree (Yes) or Disagree (No)? Provide documentation for each
1. The student has a significant cognitive disability	Review of student records indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior. <i>*Adaptive behavior is defined as essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.</i>	Yes / No
2. The student is learning content linked to (derived from) the Connecticut Core State Standards (CCSS) and the Connecticut Science Curriculum Framework (CSCF).	Goals and instruction listed in the IEP for this student are linked to the enrolled grade level CCSS and CSCF which address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for this student.	Yes / No
3. The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measureable gains in the grade- and age-appropriate curricula.	The student (a) requires extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and support that is not of a temporary or transient nature; and (b) uses substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate and transfer skills across multiple settings.	Yes / No

Students in Grade 5 and 8 who are eligible for the CTAA would also be eligible for the CMT Skills Checklist Science assessment. Therefore, all students who meet the eligibility criteria for the CTAA in Grades 5 and 8 must also participate in the CMT Skills Checklist Science assessment. Students in Grade 10 who respond in the affirmative to all three criteria elements above would be eligible to participate in the CAPT Skills Checklist Science assessment.

D. CMT/CAPT SKILLS CHECKLIST SCIENCE

The alternate assessments available for students with significant cognitive disabilities in science are the CMT Skills Checklist Science or the CAPT Skills Checklist Science. Only those students who qualify for the CTAA assessments in Grades 5 and 8 will participate in the CMT Skills Checklist Science. Students in Grade 10 with significant cognitive disabilities will ONLY participate in the CAPT Skills Checklist Science. These alternate Science assessments are designed for those students with significant cognitive disabilities whose educational program centers on the general education curriculum, but also may include functional/daily living/self-

help/social skills components. These students, who may participate in inclusive classrooms and in general education activities typically, have academic goals, as well as other goals with a functional focus.

Criteria for Including Students in the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science

In determining whether a special education student should be assessed with the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science, the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) should consider the criteria described in the [CTAA and CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science Eligibility & Learner Characteristics Inventory](#) described above. While there are no specific IQ requirements for participation in the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science, students who are assessed with the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science typically score two or more standard deviations below the mean in terms of overall cognitive ability and have significant limitations both in intellectual functioning and in adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social and practical adaptive skills. Frequently these students have been identified as having an intellectual disability (ID); however, students with other types of disabilities (e.g., autism, multiple disabilities, traumatic brain injury, etc.) who have evidence in their files of a significant cognitive disability may also satisfy the criteria for participation in the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science.

The following factors **may not** serve as the sole basis for the determination to include a student in the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science:

- the student’s disability category (e.g., intellectual disability, autism, etc.);
- the student’s placement (e.g., self-contained classroom, regional program, etc.);
- the amount of time spent with nondisabled peers (e.g., 20 percent of the time, 10 percent of the time, etc.); and
- an expectation that, even with accommodations, the student will not score well on the standard version of the CMT or CAPT Science.

E. REQUIRED TRAINING FOR TEACHERS ADMINISTERING CONNECTICUT ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT (CTAA) & CMT/CAPT SKILLS CHECKLIST SCIENCE

The administration of both the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) and the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science requires that the teacher who is primarily responsible for the student’s academic instruction receive training through the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE). Training is provided through an online course or through in-person workshops made available by the CSDE at the beginning of each school year. These links will provide you with more information:

[2016-17 CSDE LIVE Alternate Assessment System Training](#) or

[2016-17 CSDE ONLINE Alternate Assessment System Training](#)

VI. GUIDELINES FOR MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT DESIGNATED SUPPORTS/ACCOMMODATIONS

The Smarter Balanced Assessments, the CMT Science and the CAPT Science are provided to students via an online environment using the Test Delivery System provided by American Institutes for Research (AIR). The online environment provides the opportunity for individualization during testing. Students are able to access embedded and non-embedded Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations depending upon their learning needs and eligibility.

A. DESCRIPTION OF SMARTER BALANCED AND CMT /CAPT SCIENCE UNIVERSAL TOOLS, DESIGNATED SUPPORTS/ACCOMMODATIONS CATEGORIES

The Smarter Balanced Assessments, the CMT Science and the CAPT Science are provided to students via an online environment using the Test Delivery System provided by American Institutes for Research (AIR). The online environment provides the opportunity for individualization during testing. Students are able to access embedded and non-embedded Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations depending upon their learning needs and eligibility.

Smarter Balanced Governing States approved the [Smarter Balanced Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines](#) for the assessment system. These guidelines were developed in collaboration with member states and nationally recognized experts on English language learners and students with disabilities. The research-based policy outlines three categories of resources to ensure that the assessments meet the needs of all students. These categories of resources are universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations for the Smarter Balanced assessments of English language arts/literacy and mathematics. The Guidelines are intended for school-level personnel and decision-making teams, particularly individualized education program (IEP) teams, as they prepare for and implement the Smarter Balanced assessment. The guidelines provide information for classroom teachers, English development educators, special education teachers, and related services personnel to use in selecting and administering universal tools, designated supports and accommodations for those students who need them. The guidelines are also intended for assessment staff and administrators who oversee the decisions that are made in instruction and assessment.

This document is a foundation for the Connecticut Assessment Guidelines. There are however, some differences for implementation for some of the designated supports/accommodations, as they are applied in Connecticut based upon historical policy and the addition of CMT/CAPT

Science. The following sections include both, similar information provided in the Smarter Balanced Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines and those differences as they apply to students in Connecticut who participate the Smarter Balanced Assessments and/or the CMT/CAPT Science.

Universal Tools, Designated Supports and Accommodations are grouped into two broader categories based upon how they are provided to the student. They are:

- **Embedded:** Available through the online computer platform.
- **Non-Embedded:** Provided to the student by the school.

Universal tools are available to all students based on student preference and selection for the Smarter Balanced or CMT/CAPT Science assessments. Universal tools are access features of the assessment that are either provided as digitally delivered components of the test delivery system or provided separately from the digital platform.

Designated Supports for the Smarter Balanced or CMT/CAPT Science assessments are those features that are available for use by any student including English Learners for whom the need has been indicated by an educator (or team of educators with parent/guardian and student). It is recommended that a consistent process be developed and used to determine these supports for individual students. All educators making these decisions should be trained on the process and should be made aware of the range of designated supports available.

Accommodations are changes in procedures or materials that increase equitable access during the Smarter Balanced or CMT/CAPT Science assessments. The accommodations are available for students for whom there is documentation of the need for these accommodations on an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 accommodation plan. Assessment accommodations generate valid assessment results for students who need them; they allow these students to show what they know and can do.

B. UNIVERSAL TOOLS

What Are Universal Tools?

Universal tools are access features of the assessment that are either provided as digitally-delivered components of the test administration system or separate from it. Universal tools are available to all students based on student preference and selection. The following Universal Tools are not modifications. The use of Universal Tools yields valid scores that meet the requirements for participation and assessment identified in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) when used in a manner consistent with the Guidelines.

Embedded Universal Tools

The Smarter Balanced and the CMT/CAPT Science digitally-delivered assessments include a wide array of embedded universal tools. These are available to all students as part of the technology platform. Listed below are the embedded universal tools available to all students

for computer administered Smarter Balanced and CMT/CAPT Science assessments. This list includes a description of each tool. Although these tools are generally available to all students, educators may determine that one or more might be distracting for a particular student, and thus might indicate that the tool should be turned off for the administration of the assessment to the student.

1) EMBEDDED UNIVERSAL TOOLS

a. Breaks

The number of items per session can be flexibly defined based on the student's need. Breaks of more than 20 minutes will prevent the student from returning to items already attempted by the student. There is no limit on the number of breaks that a student might be given. The use of this universal tool may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment. Breaks for CMT or CAPT Science may not be administered over multiple days and must be administered within the required testing time limits.

b. Calculator (for calculator-allowed mathematics items only, Grades 6-8) (See Non-embedded Accommodations for students who cannot use the embedded calculator)

An embedded on-screen digital calculator can be accessed for calculator-allowed items when students click on the calculator button. This tool is available only with the specific items for which the Smarter Balanced Item Specifications indicated that it would be appropriate. When the embedded calculator, as presented for all students, is not appropriate for a student (for example, for a student who is blind), the student may use the calculator offered with assistive technology devices (such as a talking calculator or a braille calculator).

c. Digital notepad

This tool is used for making notes about an item. The digital notepad is item-specific and is available through the end of the test segment. Notes are not saved when the student moves on to the next segment or after a break of more than 20 minutes.

d. English glossary

Grade- and context-appropriate definitions of specific construct-irrelevant terms are shown in English on the screen via a pop-up window. The student can access the embedded glossary by clicking on any of the pre-selected terms. The use of this accommodation may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment. *(Not available for Science)*

e. Expanded passages/Stimuli

Each passage or stimulus can be expanded so that it takes up a larger portion of the screen.

f. Highlighter

A digital tool for marking desired text, item questions, item answers, or parts of these

with a color. Highlighted text remains available throughout each test segment.

g. Keyboard navigation

Navigation throughout text can be accomplished by using a keyboard.

h. Mark for review

Allows students to flag items for future review during the assessment. Markings are not saved when the student moves on to the next segment or after a break of more than 20 minutes.

i. Math tools

These digital tools (i.e., embedded ruler, embedded protractor) are used for measurements related to math items. They are available only with the specific items for which the Smarter Balanced Item Specifications indicate that one or more of these tools would be appropriate.

j. Strikethrough

Allows users to cross out answer options. If an answer option is an image, a strikethrough line will not appear, but the image will be grayed out.

k. Writing tools

Selected writing tools (i.e., bold, italic, bullets, undo/redo) are available for all student-generated responses.

l. Zoom

A tool for making text or other graphics in a window or frame appear larger on the screen. The default font size for all tests is 14 pt. The student can make text and graphics larger by clicking the Zoom In button. The student can click the Zoom Out button to return to the default or smaller print size. When using the zoom feature, the student only changes the size of text and graphics on the current screen. To increase the default print size of the entire test (from 1.5X to 3.0X default size), the print size must be set for the student in the Administration and Registration Tool (ART), or member's comparable platform), or set by the test administrator prior to the start of the test. This is the only feature that test administrators can set. The use of this universal tool may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.

2) NON-EMBEDDED UNIVERSAL TOOLS

Some universal tools may need to be provided outside of the computer test administration system. These tools, shown below, are to be provided locally for those students. They can be made available to any student.

a. Breaks

Breaks may be given at predetermined intervals or after completion of sections of the assessment for students taking a paper-based test. Sometimes students are allowed to take breaks when individually needed to reduce cognitive fatigue when they experience

heavy assessment demands. The use of this universal tool may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment. *(Not available over multiple days for Science)*

b. Scratch paper / White board with marker

Scratch paper to make notes, write computations, or record responses may be made available. Only plain paper or lined paper is appropriate for ELA. Graph paper is required beginning in sixth grade and can be used on all math assessments. A whiteboard with marker may be used as scratch paper. As long as the construct being measured is not impacted, assistive technology devices, including low-tech assistive technology (Math Window), are permitted to make notes. The assistive technology device needs to be consistent with the child's IEP or 504 plan and acceptable to the member. Access to internet must be disabled on assistive technology devices.

- 1) Computer Adapted Test (CAT): All scratch paper must be collected and securely destroyed at the end of each CAT assessment session to maintain test security. All notes on whiteboards or assistive technology devices must be erased at the end of each CAT session.
- 2) Performance Tasks: For mathematics performance tasks, if a student needs to take the performance task in more than one session, scratch paper, whiteboards, and/or assistive technology devices may be collected at the end of each session, securely stored, and made available to the student at the next performance task testing session. Once the student completes the performance task, the scratch paper must be collected and securely destroyed, whiteboards should be erased, and notes on assistive technology devices erased to maintain test security.

C. DESIGNATED SUPPORTS

What Are Designated Supports?

Designated supports are those features available for use by **any student** for whom the need has been indicated by an educator (or team of educators with parent/guardian and student). Scores achieved by students using designated supports will be included for federal accountability purposes. It is recommended that a consistent process be used to determine these supports for individual students. All educators making these decisions should be trained on the process and should be made aware of the range of designated supports available. Two general types of designated supports are identified, digitally-embedded and non-embedded.

Designated supports need to be identified prior to assessment administration. Embedded and non-embedded supports must be entered into the [Test Information and Distribution Engine \(TIDE\)](#). Any non-embedded designated supports must be acquired prior to testing with the assumption the student is using it during instruction.

Who Makes Decisions About Designated Supports?

Informed adults make decisions about designated supports. Ideally, the decisions are made by

all educators familiar with the student’s characteristics and needs, as well as those supports that the student has been using during instruction and for other assessments. Student input to the supports decision, particularly for older students, is also recommended.

1) **EMBEDDED DESIGNATED SUPPORTS**

a. **Color Contrast**

Enable students to adjust screen background or font color, based on student needs or preferences. This may include reversing the colors for the entire interface or choosing the color of font and background; Black on White; **Yellow on Blue**; Medium Gray on Light Gray; or **Reverse Contrast**.

b. **Masking**

Masking involves blocking off content that is not of immediate need or that may be distracting to the student. Students are able to focus their attention on a specific part of a test item by masking. Masking allows students to hide and reveal individual answer options, as well as all navigational buttons and menus.

c. **Print Size Online**

Print Size Online allows the font size viewed by the student in the test delivery system to be preset for the entire test. This designated support is generally most beneficial for students with visual disabilities. Selections are entered in the TIDE system prior to testing.

Smarter Balanced & CMT/CAPT Science			Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA)		
Levels	Magnification	Font Size	Levels	Magnification	Font Size
L0-default	1X	14	L0-default	1X	18
L1	1.5X	21	L1	1.5X	27
L2	1.75X	24.5	L2	1.75X	31.5
L3	2.5X	35	L3	2.5X	45
L4	3X	42	L4	3X	54
L5	5X	70	L5	5X	90
L6	10X	140	L6	10X	180
L7	15X	210	L7	15X	270
L8	20X	280	L8	20X	360

d. **Text-to-Speech- (Mathematics Items, ELA Items- NOT reading passages, Science)**

Allows text to be read aloud to the student via embedded text-to-speech (TTS) technology. The student is able to control the speed, as well as raise or lower the volume of the voice via a volume control. (Science, Math and ELA items, **not for ELA reading passages**) TTS is currently available only in English.

e. Turn Off Any Universal Tools

Disabling any universal tools that might be distracting or that students do not need to use, or are unable to use. Students who are easily distracted (whether or not designated as having attention difficulties or disabilities) may be overwhelmed by some of the universal tools.

2) NON-EMBEDDED DESIGNATED SUPPORTS

a. Color Contrast

Test content of online items may be printed with different colors. Requires Print on Demand Accommodation. Students with attention difficulties may need this support for viewing the test when digitally-provided color contrasts do not meet their needs. Some students with visual impairments or other print disabilities (including learning disabilities) also may need this support. Choice of colors should be informed by evidence of those colors that meet the student's needs.

b. Color Overlays

Color transparencies are placed over a paper-based assessment. Students with attention difficulties may need this support to view test content. This support also may be needed by some students with visual impairments or other print disabilities (including learning disabilities). Requires Print on Demand Accommodation or a Large Print Test Booklet. Choice of color should be informed by evidence of those colors that meet the student's needs.

c. Magnification Device

The size of specific areas of the screen (e.g., text, formulas, tables, graphics, and navigation buttons) may be adjusted by the student with an assistive technology device. Magnification allows increasing the size to a level not provided for by the Zoom universal tool. Students use to viewing enlarged text or graphics, or navigation buttons may need magnification to comfortably view content. This support also may meet the needs of students with visual impairments and other print disabilities. The use of this designated support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.

d. Noise Buffering

Ear mufflers, white noise, whisper phone, and/or other equipment used to block external sounds. Student (not groups of students) wears equipment to reduce environmental noises. Students may have these testing variations if regularly used in the classroom. Students who use noise buffers will need headphones unless tested individually in a separate setting.

e. Read Aloud – (Mathematics Items, ELA Items- **NOT reading passages, Science)**

Text is read aloud to the student by a trained and qualified human reader who follows the test administration manual, security procedures and the [Read Aloud Guidelines](#). All or portions of the content may be read aloud. Students who are struggling readers may

need assistance accessing the assessment by having all or portions of the assessment read aloud. This support also may be needed by students with reading-related disabilities, or by students who are blind and do not yet have adequate braille skills. If not used regularly during instruction, this support is likely to be confusing and may impede the performance on assessments. Readers must be provided to students on an individual basis – not to a group of students. A student should have the option of asking a reader to slow down or repeat text. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment and the student will need to be tested in a separate setting.

f. Separate Setting

Students who are easily distracted (or may distract others) in the presence of other students, for example, may need an alternate location to be able to take the assessment. The separate setting may be in a different room that allows them to work individually or among a smaller group, or in the same room, but in a specific location (for example, away from windows, doors, or pencil sharpeners, in a study carrel, with a whisper phone, near the teacher's desk, or in the front of a classroom). Some students may benefit from being in an environment that allows for movement, such as being able to walk around. In some instances, students may need to interact with instructional or test content outside of school, such as in a hospital or their home. A specific adult, employed by the school and trained in a manner consistent with the Test Administration Manual (TAM), including security procedures may act as test proctor (test administrator) for the student. Some designated supports or accommodations require students to be assessed individually. These students would also require a separate setting. Examples include students accessing the Read Aloud designated support or accommodation, talking calculator or speech-to-text.

g. Simplified Test Directions

The designated support for Simplified directions allows the test administrator to simplify or paraphrase the test directions found in the test administration manual according to the Simplified Test Directions Guidelines. Students who need additional support understanding the test directions may benefit from this resource. This Designated Support may require testing in a separate setting to avoid distracting other test takers. (NOT available for Science)

D. ADDITIONAL DESIGNATED SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS IDENTIFIED AS ENGLISH LEARNERS (EL)

Programs of English Language instruction help students who are English language learners acquire the necessary spoken and written English skills.

Both bilingual and transitional English as a second language (ESL) programs provide language supports to make instruction in English understandable. A bilingual education program uses the student's native language, as well as English for instruction in content areas, pursuant to Section 10-17e of the C.G.S. while other types of EL programs focus on developing English

literacy rather than instruction in content areas, per se.

Many of the Language supports used in instruction for English learners are incorporated in the designated supports provided on the Smarter Balanced and Science assessments. English Learner Designated Supports for testing must be entered on the [Test Information and Distribution Engine \(TIDE\)](#).

1) EMBEDDED DESIGNATED SUPPORTS for English Learners

a. Translations-Math (Glossary)

The translated glossaries are provided in some languages for selected construct-irrelevant terms for math. Translations for these terms appear on the computer screen when students click on them. Students may also select the audio icon next to the glossary term and listen to the audio recording of the glossary. This Designated Support is intended as a language support for students who have limited English language skills whether or not they are designated as ELs or ELs with disabilities. These students may use the translation glossary for specific math items. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.

Languages currently supported for [Translation Glossary](#) (Includes Audio): *Arabic; Cantonese; Filipino (Tagalog & Ilokano); Korean; Mandarin; Punjabi; Russian; Spanish; Ukrainian; Vietnamese.*

b. Translations-Math (Stacked) Spanish ONLY

Stacked translations are a language support available for some Spanish speaking students. In a stacked translation the full translation of each math test item appears above the original item in English. Students can see test directions in Spanish as well. Students whose primary language is not English and who use dual language supports in the classroom, use of the stacked (dual language) translation may be appropriate. Students participate in the assessment regardless of the language. This support will increase reading load and cognitive load. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.

c. Translation Test Directions-Math, Spanish ONLY

Translation Test Directions is a language support available prior to beginning the actual math test items. Students who have limited English language skills may use the translated directions support. This support should only be used for students who are proficient readers in the non-English language and not proficient in English. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.

2) NON-EMBEDDED DESIGNATED SUPPORTS for English Learners

a. Bilingual Dictionary – Science

A bilingual/dual language word-to-word dictionary is a language support. For students whose primary language is not English and who use dual language supports in the

classroom, use of a bilingual/dual language word-to-word dictionary may be appropriate. Students participate in the assessment regardless of the language. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.

b. Native Language Reader Directions Only – Science

All test directions may be read and clarified in English or the student’s native language for EL students who have been identified as needing this support. A non-certified or certified staff person may administer this accommodation.

c. Read Aloud in Spanish – Math

Spanish text for math items is read aloud to the student by a trained and qualified human reader who follows the test administration manual, security procedures and the Read Aloud Guidelines. Students receiving the Translations (stacked) Designated Support and who are struggling readers may need assistance accessing the assessment by having all or portions of the assessment read aloud. This support also may be needed by students with reading-related disabilities. If not used regularly during instruction, this support is likely to be confusing and may impede the performance on assessments. A student should have the option of asking a reader to slow down or repeat text. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment and the student will need to be tested in a separate setting.

d. Translations -Math (Glossary) - Only Large Print Paper/Pencil Assessment

Translated glossaries are a language support. Translated glossaries are provided for selected construct-irrelevant terms for math. Glossary terms are listed by item and include the English term and its translated equivalent. Students who have limited English language skills can use the translation glossary for specific items. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.

Languages currently supported for Non-Embedded Translations-Math (Glossary) include: *Arabic; Cantonese; Dakota; Filipino (Tagalog & Ilokano); French; Korean; Mandarin; Punjabi, Russian; Spanish; Ukrainian; Vietnamese.*

e. Translations Test Directions- ELA items and Math items

A PDF of directions translated in each of the languages currently supported for English language arts and math. A bilingual adult reads to student or if the student is literate in the selected language they may read the directions independently. Students who have limited English language skills (whether or not designated as ELs or ELs with disabilities) can use the translated test directions. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment, as well as a separate setting.

Languages currently supported for the Non-Embedded Translation Test Directions include: *Arabic; Cantonese; Dakota; Filipino; (Tagalog & Ilokano); French; Haitian-Creole; Hmong; Japanese; Korean; Lakota; Mandarin; Punjabi; Russian; Somali; Spanish; Ukrainian; Vietnamese; Yupik.*

VII. ACCOMMODATIONS FOR TESTING

In this document, the term “test accommodations” refers to procedures in presentation, response and other areas during test administration that provide equitable access during the assessment for students with disabilities. These accommodations should not affect how scores are interpreted. Changes in test content generally are considered to be “test modifications.” Test modifications are changes in test administration or content such that the resulting test scores cannot be interpreted in the same way as scores from the original test administered in the standard manner.

- **Presentation Supports/Accommodations** - Allow students to access information in ways that do not require them to visually read standard print. These alternate modes of access are auditory, multisensory, tactile and visual.
- **Response Supports/Accommodations** - Allow students to complete activities, assignments and assessments in different ways or to solve or organize problems using some type of assistive device or organizer.
- **Other Supports/Accommodations** - Allow students the use of non-embedded material or devices.

A. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT ACCOMMODATIONS

Both constitutional and statutory laws have shaped policy regarding the testing of students with disabilities. The 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is viewed as being particularly relevant to assessment issues. Specifically, the 14th Amendment guarantees equal protection under the law which, in the educational domain, translates into a guarantee of equal educational opportunity. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 are civil rights statutes that prohibit discrimination and guarantee access and equity. Together, these acts entitle students with disabilities to participate in, and receive the benefits to be derived from, statewide testing efforts.

Accommodations provided to a student during statewide testing must be accommodations provided for classroom instruction and other assessments given throughout the school year. It is critical to note that although some accommodations may be appropriate for instructional use, they may not be appropriate for use on a standardized assessment. There may be consequences (e.g., invalidating a student’s test score) for the use of some accommodations during state assessments. It is very important for educators to become familiar with state policies regarding accommodations during statewide assessments.

Typically, accommodation use does not begin and end in school. Students who use accommodations will generally also need them at home, in the community, in postsecondary

education and at work. Accommodations for instruction and assessment should be integrally intertwined.

Accommodations for test administration are provided to allow students with disabilities the opportunity to demonstrate their aptitude and achievement in testing situations rather than reflect their impairments. Although test accommodations provide students with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge, they do not guarantee equal outcomes. Again, an appropriate or reasonable accommodation should not interfere with the use of interpretation of a student's scores. Accommodations for testing in Smarter Balanced and CMT/CAPT Science must be entered on the [Test Information and Distribution Engine \(TIDE\)](#).

B. WHO MAY RECEIVE ACCOMMODATIONS?

1) **Students Who Receive Special Education Services**

Accommodations are available for the Smarter Balanced assessments and the CMT/CAPT Science. The student's IEP must specify which accommodations will be used during testing and should generally reflect similar accommodations needed for instruction. The decisions regarding accommodations are made by the PPT team and should not be individual teacher decisions made immediately before or during test administration. These accommodations should be recommended by a student's teachers in consultation with one another and a principal/supervisor and the rationale for the decision should be documented in the student's IEP. These accommodations are also documented on the [Test Information and Distribution Engine \(TIDE\)](#). Accommodations indicated in a student's IEP are also provided to students eligible for the CTAA and/or the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science. (Allowable accommodations for special education students are outlined in Section VII C.)

2) **Students Identified as Disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

Accommodations are available for the Smarter Balanced and CMT/CAPT Science assessments. The student's 504 Plan must specify which accommodations will be used during testing and should generally reflect similar accommodations needed for instruction. The decisions regarding accommodations are made by the 504 planning team and should not be individual teacher decisions made immediately before or during test administration. These accommodations should be recommended by a student's teachers in consultation with one another and a principal/supervisor and the rationale for the decision should be documented in the student's 504 plan. These accommodations are also documented on the [Test Information and Distribution Engine \(TIDE\)](#). (Allowable accommodations for 504 students are outlined in Section VII C.)

3) **Students Identified as English Learners (EL) with Disabilities**

Accommodations are available for the Smarter Balanced and CMT/CAPT Science assessments. If a student is an English Learner and is also identified as a student with disabilities and has an active IEP or 504 Plan the student may be provided accommodations for testing. These accommodations should generally reflect similar accommodations needed for instruction and be documented in the IEP or 504 Plan.

4) Students with Temporary Disabling Conditions - Broken Fingers, Arms, Shoulders, or Concussions etc.

A student who is injured (broken arms, shoulder, fingers, concussion etc.) in the days just before or during test administration has a temporary disability and *may* be eligible for accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This determination of temporary disability is made by a 504 planning team at a meeting in which the injury is documented, the student is determined eligible for Section 504 status, and a plan is developed outlining the accommodations necessary, if any, for the student to participate in instructional activities and the statewide assessment. Once identified as eligible for Section 504 status, students with broken fingers, arms, shoulder, or concussions etc., are allowed to use a variety of accommodations. In many cases delaying testing until later in the test window allows the swelling to go down sufficiently, so that the students can still write or type responses in spite of a cast, splint, etc. In other instances, as the students become adjusted or acclimated to a cast, splint, etc., they find creative ways to perform routine tasks, including providing a written or typed response on the test. In exceptional circumstances, there may be a student whose temporary disabilities are such that the allowable supports and accommodations listed in the *Assessment Guidelines* may not be sufficient to meet the student's current needs for the summative assessment. In these cases, the District Test Coordinator should contact the Bureau of Student Assessment.

C. ALLOWABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION AND 504 STUDENTS ONLY

All students taking the Smarter Balanced and CMT/CAPT Science summative assessments are allowed the use of various accessibility tools both, embedded and non-embedded when appropriate for the content area test they are taking. All students are also allowed access to designated supports if a determination has been made through a student's needs profile. In this section accommodations are discussed which are allowed only for students with disabilities with an IEP or Section 504 plan.

Eligible students participating in the Connecticut Alternate Assessment for English language arts/literacy and math, as well as the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science are provided accommodations described in their IEP by the Teacher Administering the Alternate in accordance with the appropriate testing manual and required training.

1) Embedded Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

a. American Sign Language- ELA- Listening, Mathematics

Test content in the Smarter Balanced Assessment is translated into an American Sign Language (ASL) video. The ASL human signer and the signed test content are viewed on the same screen. Students may view portions of the ASL video, as often as needed. Some students who are deaf or hard of hearing and who typically use ASL may need this accommodation when accessing text-based content in the assessment. The use of this accommodation may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment. For many students who are deaf or hard of hearing, viewing signs is the

only way to access information presented orally. It is important to note, however, that some students who are hard of hearing will be able to listen to information presented orally if provided with appropriate amplification and a setting in which extraneous sounds do not interfere with clear presentation of the audio presentation in a listening test. This document provides instructions on how to access and use the ASL embedded accommodation for the Smarter Balanced Assessments [Embedded Accommodation – American Sign Language \(ASL\) Instructions](#). (See VII Section C 2.I. regarding CMT/CAPT Science Sign Language Accommodation)

b. Braille- Refreshable Braille Devices

In the Smarter Balanced Assessment, Braille is a raised-dot code that individuals read with their fingertips. For all tests, contracted and non-contracted braille is available; Nemeth code is available for math. More information is available at: [Technical Specifications Manual for Online Testing](#) and [Technology Requirements for Text-To-Braille](#). Permissive mode must be indicated within the TIDE system to access this accommodation.

c. Braille- Embosser

This presentation accommodation in the Smarter Balanced Assessment provides the graphic material (e.g., maps, charts, graphs, diagrams, and illustrations) in a raised format (paper or thermoform). For all tests, contracted and non-contracted braille is available; Nemeth code is available for math. More information is available at: [Technical Specifications Manual for Online Testing](#) and [Technology Requirements for Text-To-Braille](#). Permissive mode must be indicated within the TIDE system to access this accommodation.

d. Closed Captioning for Smarter Balanced ELA Listening

This accommodation provides printed English text on the computer screen while audio materials are presented. Students who are deaf or hard of hearing and who typically access information presented via audio by reading words that appear in synchrony with the audio may benefit from this accommodation.

e. Streamline

This accommodation allows any tests to be presented without a split screen. Items are presented sequentially below the stimuli.

f. Text-to-Speech for ELA Reading Passages

This accommodation allows the reading passages text to be read aloud to the student via embedded text-to-speech technology. This accommodation is only for students in Grades 3-8 with a documented print disability or blind students who do not yet have adequate braille skills. Text-to-speech for ELA reading passages is not available for ELs (unless the student has an IEP or 504 plan). The Text-to-Speech for ELA Reading Passages accommodation is intended for a small group of students. The [Text-to-Speech and Read Aloud Decision Guidelines 2016-17](#) must be submitted to the CSDE prior to testing for each student being provided this accommodation. When text-to-speech is

used, appropriate headphones must be available to the student, unless the student is tested individually in a separate setting.

2) Non-Embedded Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

a. 100s Number Table

A paper-based table listing numbers from 1-100 available from Smarter Balanced for reference. Students with visual processing or spatial perception needs may find this beneficial, as documented in their IEP or 504 plan. [The 100s Number Table.](#)

b. Abacus -Mathematics

This tool may be used in place of scratch paper for students who typically use an abacus. This accommodation is only available for the Smarter Balanced mathematics test.

c. Alternate Response Options

Alternate response options include, but are not limited to adapted keyboards, large keyboards, StickyKeys, MouseKeys, FilterKeys, adapted mouse, touch screen, head wand, and switches. Students with some physical disabilities (including both fine motor and gross motor skills) may need to use the alternate response options accommodation to access the Smarter Balanced assessment. Some alternate response options are external devices that must be plugged in and be compatible with the assessment delivery platform. Therefore, it is very important to use the devices with the Smarter Balanced Practice Site to ensure compatibility and provide more familiarity for testing for the student. Permissive mode must be indicated within the TIDE system to access this accommodation.

d. Braille Booklet-ELA, Math and CMT/CAPT Science

This accommodation is a fixed test form booklet that provides the test content in Braille. It is typically used by students who have visual disabilities. Contracted or Non-contracted forms may be selected.

e. Braille Supplemental Math Booklet for Online Fixed Form Test

This accommodation is a fixed form for Smarter Balanced math that provides the test content in a fixed form with embossed items. When this option is selected student will no longer access the Embedded Braille form which is adaptable.

f. Calculator (Mathematics-Grade 6 and above only)

The calculator accommodation is a non-embedded calculator for students needing a special calculator, such as a braille calculator or a talking calculator. Care must be taken to ONLY provide it for the Smarter Balanced mathematics calculator allowed items in Grades 6-8.

g. Large Print Booklet

This accommodation is a fixed-test form booklet that provides enlarged content. It is typically used by students who have visual disabilities.

h. Multiplication Table-Mathematics-Grades 4-8

A paper-based single digit (1-9) [multiplication table](#) is available for students in Grades 4 and above for the Smarter Balanced mathematics assessment. This tool may be used for reference by students with an IEP or 504 plan documenting the need for this accommodation. These students typically demonstrate a persistent calculation disability (i.e., dyscalculia).

i. Print on Demand

The Print on Demand Accommodation may only be provided through the [Special Accommodations Procedure](#). Some students with disabilities may need paper copies of either passages/stimuli and/or items. A very small percentage of students need this accommodation. The use of this accommodation may result in the student needing additional time to complete the assessment. Permissive mode must be indicated within the TIDE system to access this accommodation.

j. Read Aloud for the Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Passages Grades 3-8

The Read Aloud Accommodation for ELA Reading Passages for students in Grades 3-8 may only be provided through the [Special Accommodations Procedure](#). Text is read aloud in English to the student by a trained and qualified human reader who follows the [Guidelines for Read Aloud, Test Reader](#) and who has submitted a signed [Read Aloud Protocol for Smarter Balanced Assessments Security/Confidentiality Agreement Form](#). All or portions of the content may be read aloud. Reading passages of the ELA assessment may be read aloud to students in Grades 3-8 with a documented print disability or blind students who do not yet have adequate braille skills. These students must be tested individually. In addition, the [Text-to-Speech and Read Aloud Decision Guidelines 2016-17](#) must be submitted to the CSDE prior to testing for each student being provided this accommodation.

k. Scribe

The accommodation for the provision of a scribe requires the [Special Accommodations Procedure](#). Teachers must be trained and complete the Scribe Protocol provided by the CSDE when the special accommodation petition permission has been approved. Students dictate their responses to a qualified person who records verbatim what they dictate. These students may have significant processing or motor difficulties requiring a scribe for lengthy responses in instruction and assessment. This accommodation may result in the student needing additional time to complete the assessment.

l. Sign Language for Test Items-CMT/CAPT Science

The Sign Language Accommodation for CMT/CAPT Science allows a qualified test administrator to sign the CMT/CAPT Science test directions or test content to a student who is deaf or hard of hearing. Students are tested individually and if necessary a sign language interpreter may assist in test administration by providing directions and clarifying information as allowed in the CMT/CAPT Science Test Examiner's Manual.

m. Speech-to-Text, (Voice-Recognition Software)

The Speech-to-Text or Voice-Recognition Software Accommodation allows students to use their voices as input devices to the computer, to dictate responses or give commands (e.g., opening application programs, pulling down menus, and saving work). Students use their own assistive technology devices which generally include a microphone and headphones. Typically, students who have motor or processing disabilities (such as dyslexia) may use this accommodation and find it beneficial. Students need to be familiar with the software, and have had many opportunities to use it during instruction. Speech-to-text software requires that students know writing conventions and that they have the review and editing skills thus, experience with this accommodation prior to testing is essential. When students use their own assistive technology devices, all assessment content must be deleted from these devices after testing for security purposes. Permissive mode must be indicated within the TIDE system to access this accommodation.

n. Time Extension - CMT/CAPT Science

Time extensions beyond those stated in the CMT/CAPT Science Test Examiner's Manual may be granted to students whose disability makes completion of the test within prescribed time limits unrealistic. For each testing session, time may be extended for as long as necessary provided the student does not suffer from fatigue and the test session is not carried over to another day. (For example, CAPT Science I may be administered on one day and Science II may be administered the following day; however, neither section may be administered over two days.) A good benchmark for time extensions is one and a half times the standard testing period for a specific subtest. Students who receive extended time **must be tested separately** from those students tested under standard time limits. If factors such as mental and/or physical fatigue or disruptive behavior present a problem, it is acceptable to plan breaks within one sitting of the test administration or to spread out test activities over several sittings in one day. Care should be taken to ensure that students do not have an opportunity to share and/or compare test information during any breaks that are provided.

Some students with health problems and/or medication schedules benefit by being tested at particular times of the day (e.g., first thing in the morning, immediately following medication, etc.). It is permissible to test at a time that is most beneficial to the student.

Time Extension Science may also be provided to students who are English Learners. The time extension accommodation in CMT/CAPT Science for students who have an IEP, a 504 Plan or who are English learners must be entered on the [Test Information and Distribution Engine \(TIDE\)](#).

D. DOCUMENTATION OF TESTING RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE IEP OR SECTION 504 PLAN

All designated supports/accommodations recommended for students identified as special

education, Section 504, English learner (EL), or English learner with disabilities **must** be entered on [Test Information and Distribution Engine \(TIDE\)](#) **prior to testing**.

Documentation on Data Entry Interface (DEI) **prior to testing** for every student assessed with the CTAA and the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science, requires submission of the [CTAA and CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science Eligibility & Learner Characteristics Inventory \(LCI\)](#).

For questions about the entry of test settings in TIDE, contact the Student Assessment Office at 860-713-6855 or 860-713-6837.

E. SELECTING APPROPRIATE TEST DESIGNATED SUPPORTS OR ACCOMMODATIONS

Deriving useful and meaningful interpretations from student responses is a major goal of any testing program. No designated support or accommodation should interfere with the accurate interpretation of a score. Professional judgment and experience play important roles in any decision concerning which support or accommodation is needed, the extent to which it is needed, and for which student. Listed below are some general guidelines for the PPT, 504 team or English learner team to consider in determining designated supports or accommodations for testing for each student.

- Does the designated support or accommodation fit the student's areas of strength and weakness, rather than the category of disability or language proficiency? (For example, not all students with learning disabilities have reading problems and, therefore, not all require that the math test be read to them.)
- Does the student's IEP or Section 504 plan call for the same or a similar accommodation for class work?
- Does the student use this designated support or accommodation regularly during classroom activities?
- Is the student sufficiently skilled to use this designated support or accommodation with ease or will it serve as an impediment? This question is especially pertinent when considering the digital environment and the use of technology or assistive technology devices. (For example, if a student is allowed to use text-to-speech, but has not experienced a digital voice during classwork, this accommodation may hamper his or her performance.)
- Is the designated support or accommodation necessary for this child? (For example, a student with a visual impairment who reads well may not need math problems read to him or her, but may require streamline view to better navigate enlarged text.)

F. SUPPORTS AND ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS

Students with significant cognitive disabilities participating in the Connecticut Alternate Assessment and/or the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science typically receive multiple supports and accommodations during instruction. Teachers also design their instruction to be more accessible through various strategies and scaffolding. Both alternate assessments were developed to incorporate the typical scaffolding teachers provide when test items were designed. Therefore, the expectation for students participating in the alternate assessment system is for any accommodations to be clearly defined within the IEP on page 8. During any special accommodation requests or focus monitoring activities representatives from the Connecticut State Department of Education would be able to see information related to instruction and assessment that might include communication or access supports and accommodations such as signing, use of assistive technology, read aloud or a scribe.

G. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

1) **Students Who Are Present but Do Not Take the Test**

Some students are present in school during the testing window, but for any number of reasons do not take the test. These students may or may not have disabilities or have limited English proficiency.

Students with serious emotional and behavioral concerns often are among the most difficult to test. Even with suitable accommodations and individual administration, students sometimes refuse to be tested or become agitated or disruptive to the point that testing for those students is not appropriate. If a student reaches this point, testing must be stopped.

Test Examiner's Manuals outline strategies for preparing and reassuring students prior to test administration in an effort to reduce anxiety and promote full participation. There are instances in which the student "refuses" to even attempt the test, and simply puts his or her head on the desk without disrupting other students.

2) **Reluctant Students**

In other situations, a student reluctantly begins the test and then becomes impatient or frustrated, but does not disturb other students. The test examiner should encourage the student to continue the test. For the Smarter Balanced Assessments, and the CTAA the student may resume testing at a later time or day. The student may decide to attempt the test later in the same session. The student will receive a score based on the number of items completed.

3) **Students Who Become Agitated or Disruptive**

In those circumstances where the student becomes emotionally agitated and/or disruptive, he or she should be promptly removed from the class if being tested in a group. If the student is being tested individually, the student should be provided with a break. An

attempt should be made to reassure the student and continue testing. If, however, it is apparent that the student cannot continue, the test administrator may collect the student's test materials or pause the test and remove the student from the test setting for the time remaining in the particular test period. If the student does not finish testing and has attempted any questions, the student will receive a score based on the number of items completed. If the student did not attempt any items, please refer the section titled "Students Who Are Present but Do Not Take the Test."

In all the examples provided, every reasonable effort should be made to encourage the student to complete the test on which he or she is working.

4) Accommodation Provision Error

A student's PPT team is responsible for determining the support(s)/accommodation(s) a student receiving special education services should receive during statewide testing. During testing it is essential that all proctors are aware of all supports and accommodations the student should receive for each of the sub-tests. If a student did not receive their IEP mandated supports and/or accommodation(s) or received a support and accommodation in error, the district test coordinator (DA) must be informed immediately. The DA must then contact the Bureau of Student Assessment immediately through the Appeal process to ensure all students are tested accurately.

If a student refuses the support(s)/accommodation(s) during testing, a district is encouraged to document this refusal and keep this information in the student's file. This may be important for determining appropriate supports and accommodations for this student in the future.

H. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO ACCOMMODATIONS DURING ASSESSMENT

1) Planning for Test Day

Once decisions have been made about providing accommodations to meet individual student needs, the logistics of providing the actual accommodations during state and district assessments must be mapped out. It is not uncommon for members of the PPT team, most often special education teachers, to be given the responsibility for arranging, coordinating and providing assessment accommodations for all students who may need them. Thus, it is essential for all PPT team members to know and understand the requirements and consequences of district and state assessments, including the use of accommodations. It is important to engage the appropriate personnel, including paraprofessionals to plan the logistics and provisions of assessment accommodations on test day. Prior to the day of a test, be certain that test coordinators and test examiners know what accommodations each student will be using and how to administer them properly. For example, test coordinators and test examiners need to know which students will be allowed extra time to complete the test so that separate test settings may be arranged for those students. Staff administering accommodations, such as reading to a

student, must adhere to the specific guidelines in this document so that student scores are valid.

2) Administering Assessments with Accommodations

State and local laws and policies specify practices to assure test security and the standardized and ethical administration of assessments. Test coordinators, test examiners and all staff members involved in test administration must adhere to these policies. The Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement (NCME, 1995) states that test examiners and others involved in assessments must:

- take appropriate security precautions before, during, and after the administration of the assessment;
- understand the procedures needed to administer the assessment prior to administration;
- administer standardized assessments according to prescribed procedures and conditions and notify appropriate personnel if any nonstandard or delimiting conditions occur;
- avoid any conditions in the conduct of the assessment that might invalidate the results;
- provide for and document all reasonable and allowable accommodations for the administration of the assessment to students with disabilities or special needs; and
- avoid actions or conditions that would permit or encourage individuals or groups to receive scores that misrepresent their actual levels of attainment.¹

Failure to adhere to these practices may constitute a test irregularity or a breach of test security and must be reported immediately to the Student Assessment Office at 860-713-6860 and investigated according to state testing policies.

3) Ethical Testing Practices

Ethical testing practices must be maintained during the administration of a test. Unethical testing practices relate to inappropriate interactions between test examiners and students taking the test. Unethical practices include changing the content by paraphrasing or offering additional information, coaching students during testing, editing student responses or giving clues in any way.

4) Standardization

Standardization refers to adherence to uniform administration procedures and conditions during an assessment. Standardization is an essential feature of educational assessments and is necessary to produce comparable information about student learning. Strict adherence to guidelines detailing instructions and procedures for the administration of accommodations is necessary to ensure test results reflect actual student learning.

¹. National Council on Measurement in Education. (1995). *Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement*. Washington, DC: Author.

5) Test Security

Test security maintains the confidentiality of test questions and answers, and is critical in ensuring the integrity and validity of a test. Test security can become an issue when accessible test formats are used (e.g., Braille, large print) or when someone other than the student is allowed to see the test (e.g., interpreter, reader). To ensure test security and confidentiality, test administrators need to: 1) keep testing materials in a secure place to prevent unauthorized access; 2) keep all test content confidential and refrain from sharing information or revealing test content with anyone; and 3) return all materials as instructed.

6) Connecticut's Test Security Policy

The CMT/CAPT Science and the Smarter Balanced assessment test administration manuals contain specific instructions that proctors must follow to ensure security and validity. Therefore, it is essential that each test examiner review the entire test administration manual for both assessments prior to administering any part of the Connecticut statewide assessments. Violation of test security is a serious matter with far-reaching consequences. Breaches of test security include, but are not limited to, photographing/copying of test materials, failing to return test materials, coaching students, giving students answers, and/or changing students' answers. Such acts may lead to the invalidation of an entire school district's student test scores, disruption of the test system statewide, and legal action against the individuals committing the breach. A breach of test security may be dealt with as a violation of the Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers, as well as a violation of other pertinent state and federal law and regulation. The Connecticut State Department of Education will investigate all such matters and pursue appropriate follow-up action. Any person found to have breached the security of the test system may be subject to sanctions including, but not limited to, disciplinary action by a local board of education, the revocation of Connecticut teaching certification by the Connecticut State Board of Education [see Section 10-145b(m) of the Connecticut General Statutes], and civil liability pursuant to federal copyright law.

APPENDIX A

MEDICAL EXEMPTION

Students with Temporary Medical Conditions Attending School

Every year during statewide testing, there are cases of students with various medical conditions that effect their ability to participate in testing. In some cases, the student may have a note from a medical professional stating that the student should be excused from participating in testing. State law stipulates that all public school students in the specified grades who receive educational services must participate in statewide assessment.

In some cases, a student may have been injured and the student's medical condition (e.g., broken hand or arm, concussion) may temporarily impact his or her ability to complete the test. There is no exemption from administering the statewide test to these students under the law. Therefore, to test the injured student, the first option would be to delay testing until later in the test administration window to give the student enough time to recover.

A student who is injured in the days just before or during test administration has a temporary disability and may be eligible for accommodations under Section 504. This determination of temporary disability is made by a 504 planning team at a meeting in which the injury is documented. If the student is determined eligible for Section 504 status, a plan is developed outlining the accommodations necessary, for the student to participate in instructional activities and statewide assessment. If standard accommodations are not sufficient for statewide assessment, contact the academic office to see what other accommodation options are available.

Medical Exemption Procedure

Definition: In Connecticut, the exemption determination for a medical emergency rests primarily on the following criteria. **The student is unable to attend school and is medically/emotionally unavailable for homebound/hospitalized instruction.** Students who are hospitalized or homebound due to illness should be tested unless there are medical constraints. These students can have the test administered at home or in the hospital provided the test is administered by a certified school staff member who is fully trained in the proper test administration and security procedures for the Smarter Balanced Assessments, CMT/CAPT Science and CTAA.

In rare cases, there may be a student who experiences a medical emergency just prior to or during the testing window. There is a process whereby, the student may receive an exemption from testing due to the emergency nature of the medical condition, if the criteria for exemption are met.

A medical exemption can be given to a student depending on the availability of the student during the statewide testing window. An application for medical exemption is required each year a student meets the criteria for exemption.

Step 1 – Initial Contact:

The District Test Coordinator (DA) contacts the Bureau of Student Assessment at the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) prior to the statewide testing window or at the time the student becomes medically unavailable during the statewide testing.

- Contact Joe Amenta - joseph.amenta@ct.gov (860-713-6855) or Janet Stuck - janet.stuck@ct.gov (860-713-6837).
- Provide the following information:
 - ❖ State Assigned Student Identification (SASID) number;
 - ❖ Student Name (last, first);
 - ❖ Date of Birth;
 - ❖ Grade;
 - ❖ Name of School, District, Approved Private Special Education Facility or RESC; and
 - ❖ Reason for exemption.
- You will be notified if the student meets the qualification for medical exemption and whether to proceed to Step 2.

Step 2 – Medical Form:

- Based on the result of Step 1, the DA will be provided the Emergency Medical Exemption Form. This form will be partially completed with the appropriate test dates.
- The remainder of Emergency Medical Exemption Form **must** be completed and signed by the student's attending physician.

If signed documentation is not received by the CSDE within the timeline communicated to DAs, all tests not submitted by the student will be reported as absent.

Step 3 – Returning Documentation to the CSDE:

- The DA will return a completed Emergency Medical Exemption Form and cover letter on district letterhead by U.S. mail to:

Joseph Amenta or Janet Stuck, Education Consultant
Connecticut State Department of Education
Performance Office, Bureau of Student Assessment
450 Columbus Boulevard, 7th Floor
Hartford, CT 06103

The cover letter should include:

- State Assigned Student Identification (SASID) number;
- Student Name (last, first);
- Date of Birth;
- Grade;
- Name of School, District, Approved Private Special Education Facility or RESC; and
- Reason for exemption.

<p>Joseph Amenta Education Consultant, Special Student Populations Connecticut State Department of Education Performance Office, Bureau of Student Assessment 450 Columbus Boulevard, 7th Floor Hartford, CT 06103 joseph.amenta@ct.gov Phone: 860-713-6855</p>	<p>Janet Stuck Education Consultant, Special Student Populations Connecticut State Department of Education Performance Office, Bureau of Student Assessment 450 Columbus Boulevard, 7th Floor Hartford, CT 06103 janet.stuck@ct.gov Phone: 860-713-6837</p>
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CRITERIA FOR EXEMPTION FROM TESTING DUE TO A MEDICAL EMERGENCY

TO: CMT/CAPT District Test Coordinators

FROM: Barbara Q. Beaudin, Chief
Bureau of Student Assessment

DATE: December 2006

**RE: CRITERIA FOR EXEMPTION FROM TESTING DUE
TO A MEDICAL EMERGENCY**

In guidance issued in the late spring, the U.S. Department of Education now allows states to set policies for the exemption of individual students from statewide testing in cases where there is a medical emergency. States were advised to use their own discretion in the establishment of the exemption policy. Outlined below is Connecticut's policy and discussion points for your use with staff and/or parents as well as the rationale for the policy decisions.

In Connecticut, the exemption determination for a medical emergency rests primarily on the following criteria.

The student is unable to attend school and is medically/emotionally unavailable for homebound/hospitalized instruction.

Rationale: We typically consider students who are well enough to receive homebound or hospitalized instruction well enough to be tested. The test schedule can be modified for these students so that they take only one test a day.

While we ask that the medical emergency be attested to by a physician, this attestation speaks to whether or not the student is available for homebound/hospitalized instruction. The physician is not asked to determine whether the student should take the test; the physician should determine whether the student is well enough to receive homebound or hospitalized instruction.

Factors to consider when in conversation with parents and/or school district personnel.

The illness, injury or condition is of an unexpected nature. It is not a chronic condition.

Rationale: It is expected that if the student has a chronic condition the district has taken the necessary steps to provide homebound/hospitalized instruction as necessary; has accommodations in place for test administration and is generally prepared to deal with the situation.

The emergency may be physical or emotional in nature, e.g., psychotic episode requiring hospitalization.

Rationale: Especially with adolescents, it is not unusual that the medical emergency is emotional in nature rather than just physical. We need to be sensitive to these emotional issues without exempting large numbers of students who are “nervous” and/or “anxious” about the test. We will need documentation of emotional incapacitation resulting in unavailability for instruction as determined by a qualified medical professional as the criteria for an emotional issue that is severe enough to warrant an exemption.

The student is absent due to a documented medical condition for the whole test window, including the make-up period.

Rationale: The testing window is generally long enough (about 3 weeks) to allow sufficient time for a student to make up any testing that has been missed. If the student has recovered and has time to make up the testing during the testing window, an exemption is not warranted.

Documentation of the medical emergency is required. The physician or psychiatrist must attest to the inability of the student to be available for instruction and testing. Physician means a Doctor of Medicine or Osteopathy licensed to practice medicine and surgery according to Chapter 370 and 371 of the Connecticut General Statutes, or licensed to practice medicine in another state. For the purpose of determining a medical emergency, this means attestation required from an MD, DO or Psychiatrist. Attestations from social workers will not suffice.

Rationale: The circumstances surrounding a medical emergency must have a significant impact on the student's ability to participate in the entire test. Since we are looking for documentation of a medical condition, it seems reasonable to expect the documentation come from the student's doctor.

It may be necessary for the school nurse to have a discussion with the medical personnel caring for the student in order to fully understand the emergency situation, rather than relying solely upon district or parental explanations of the situation.

Rationale: It is not uncommon during the testing window to have school personnel or parents call the CSDE to report on the medical/emotional status of a student as an argument for not participating in the test. It is frequently difficult to make a valid judgment about such circumstances from afar. Having the school nurse in communication with the doctor, as necessary, will be helpful in determining and communicating the extent of the medical emergency. The school nurse will need to obtain proper authorization from the parent to communicate directly with the physician caring for the student.

The district may have to wait until the end of the test window to determine if the student will have qualified for a medical emergency exemption, will be considered absent, or will participate in some or all of the subtests.

Rationale: It is often difficult in the week(s) before the testing window to predict the extent of the medical emergency and whether the student will be able to participate in the test during the course of the test window.

If the district is able to have a discussion with CSDE staff about the particular student in question and submit appropriate medical documentation prior to the end of the test window, then no answer booklet will be submitted to the test contractor for scoring. This student will not be reflected in CMT/CAPT reports or in the AYP calculations.


All documentation pertinent to a request for a medical exemption must be submitted by the end of the week following the close of the testing window.

If the district is unable to secure and submit medical documentation to the CSDE before the end of the test window, a test booklet must be submitted for the student.


If the subsequent determination is made that the student is eligible for an exemption, the student will not be reflected in the CMT/CAPT reports and will not be included in AYP calculations.

If the subsequent determination is made that the student is NOT eligible for an exemption, the student will be recorded as absent in the CMT/CAPT reports and will be included in the AYP calculations.

Rationale: Because medical documentation is necessary for the exemption determination, until the documentation is available for review and discussion there is no exemption. Thus, an answer booklet must be submitted. However, there is no easy way to "pull" an answer booklet once it has been submitted to the test contractor for scoring.



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**



**2017 Emergency Medical Exemption
Form For CMT/CAPT Science**

Date: _____

_____, Education Consultant
CT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Performance Office
450 Columbus Blvd, 7th FLOOR
Hartford, CT 06103

Dear _____

_____ has been under my care since _____. This student is unable to attend school and is medically/emotionally unavailable for homebound/hospitalized instruction. This student will not be available to receive such instructional services from March 27, 2017 to April 28, 2017.


Sincerely,

DOCTOR'S SIGNATURE


DOCTOR'S PRINTED NAME

Please Note: This form must be signed by a Doctor of Medicine or Osteopathy licensed to practice medicine or surgery according to Chapter 370 and 371 of the Connecticut General Statutes, or licensed to practice medicine in another state. For the purpose of determining a medical emergency, this means attestation required from an MD, DO, or Psychiatrist. Attestations from social workers will not suffice. For purposes of HIPPA, the parent must be the one to present and secure this attestation from the doctor. CSDE 9-2011

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**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**



**2017 Emergency Medical Exemption
Form For CTAA**

Date: _____

_____, Education Consultant
CT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Performance Office
450 Columbus Blvd, 7th FLOOR
Hartford, CT 06103

Dear _____

_____ has been under my care since _____. This student is unable to attend school and is medically/emotionally unavailable for homebound/hospitalized instruction. This student will not be available to receive such instructional services from March 27, 2017 to May 26, 2017.


Sincerely,

DOCTOR'S SIGNATURE


DOCTOR'S PRINTED NAME

Please Note: This form must be signed by a Doctor of Medicine or Osteopathy licensed to practice medicine or surgery according to Chapter 370 and 371 of the Connecticut General Statutes, or licensed to practice medicine in another state. For the purpose of determining a medical emergency, this means attestation required from an MD, DO, or Psychiatrist. Attestations from social workers will not suffice. For purposes of HIPPA, the parent must be the one to present and secure this attestation from the doctor. CSDE 9-2011

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**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**



**2017 Emergency Medical Exemption Form
For Connecticut SAT School Day**

Date: _____

_____, Education Consultant
CT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Performance Office
450 Columbus Blvd, 7th FLOOR
Hartford, CT 06103

Dear _____

_____ has been under my care since _____. This student is unable to attend school and is medically/emotionally unavailable for homebound/hospitalized instruction. This student will not be available to receive such instructional services on April 5, 2017 or April 25, 2017 or April 26, 2017.


Sincerely,

DOCTOR'S SIGNATURE


DOCTOR'S PRINTED NAME

Please Note: This form must be signed by a Doctor of Medicine or Osteopathy licensed to practice medicine or surgery according to Chapter 370 and 371 of the Connecticut General Statutes, or licensed to practice medicine in another state. For the purpose of determining a medical emergency, this means attestation required from an MD, DO, or Psychiatrist. Attestations from social workers will not suffice. For purposes of HIPPA, the parent must be the one to present and secure this attestation from the doctor. CSDE 9-2011

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**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**



**2017 Emergency Medical Exemption Form
For Connecticut Smarter Balanced**

Date: _____

_____, Education Consultant
CT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Performance Office
450 Columbus Blvd, 7th FLOOR
Hartford, CT 06103

Dear _____

_____ has been under my care since _____. This student is unable to attend school and is medically/emotionally unavailable for homebound/hospitalized instruction. This student will not be available to receive such instructional services from March 27, 2017 to May 26, 2017.

Sincerely,

DOCTOR'S SIGNATURE

DOCTOR'S PRINTED NAME

Please Note: This form must be signed by a Doctor of Medicine or Osteopathy licensed to practice medicine or surgery according to Chapter 370 and 371 of the Connecticut General Statutes, or licensed to practice medicine in another state. For the purpose of determining a medical emergency, this means attestation required from an MD, DO, or Psychiatrist. Attestations from social workers will not suffice. For purposes of HIPPA, the parent must be the one to present and secure this attestation from the doctor. CSDE 9-2011

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APPENDIX B

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Special Documented Accommodations Procedure

Definition: Accommodations in test administration are provided to allow students with disabilities the opportunity to demonstrate their aptitude and achievement in testing situations rather than produce a score that mainly reflects their impairments. Although, test accommodations provide students with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge, they do not guarantee equal outcomes. Again, an appropriate or reasonable accommodation should not interfere with the interpretation of a student's scores. This *Assessment Guidelines* current edition contains a substantial list of test accommodations that may be used by students with disabilities.

In exceptional circumstances, there may be a student whose disabilities are such that the allowable accommodations listed in the *Assessment Guidelines* would be insufficient to provide access to the Smarter Balanced Assessments, the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) Science, the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) Science, the Connecticut SAT School day or either alternate assessment, the CTAA or CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science. In these cases, upon request, the District Test Coordinator (DA) will be provided with information regarding the *PETITION FOR APPROVAL OF SPECIAL DOCUMENTED ACCOMMODATIONS*. These special accommodations petitions **MUST** be submitted to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) in writing, **prior** to the appropriate state testing window. These petitions must also include all of the necessary documentation to support any request for the use of an accommodation other than those allowed as indicated in the *Assessment Guidelines* current edition.

Step 1 – Initial Contact:

- The District Test Coordinator (DA) contacts the CSDE at least two months prior to start of testing and describes special testing accommodations needed for a student.

Contacts:

Janet Stuck-janet.stuck@ct.gov (860-713-6837) or
Joe Amenta-joseph.amenta@ct.gov (860-713-6855)

- Provide the following information:
 - ❖ State Assigned Student Identification (SASID) number;
 - ❖ Student Name (last, first);
 - ❖ Date of Birth;
 - ❖ Grade;
 - ❖ Name of School, and District, or Approved Private Special Education Facility or RESC; and
 - ❖ Reason for special accommodation request.
- The CSDE makes initial determination providing suggestions for alternatives utilizing standard accommodations and if necessary proceeds to Step 2.

Step 2 – Petition for Special Documented Accommodations:

- The CSDE e-mails the Petition for the Special Documented Accommodations to the DA.
- The DA must complete this form and fax or mail it with **ALL** required documentation to either Janet Stuck **or** Joseph Amenta.

Janet Stuck Education Consultant, Special Populations Connecticut State Department of Education Performance Office, Bureau of Student Assessment 450 Columbus Boulevard, 7 th Floor Hartford, CT 06103	Joseph Amenta Education Consultant, Special Populations Connecticut State Department of Education Performance Office, Bureau of Student Assessment 450 Columbus Boulevard, 7 th Floor Hartford, CT 06103
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Step 3 – Review of documentation:

- CSDE will contact the student’s teacher and/or other appropriate district staff to discuss the student’s qualifications and need for the special accommodation indicated on the Petition for Approval of Special Documented Accommodations.
- Criteria used to determine approval of a petition for special accommodations include:
 - ❖ Evidence of appropriate specificity of special accommodations requested related to the individual need of the student throughout the IEP document. (States activities where required/duration/personnel support etc.)
 - ❖ Evidence that requested special accommodations are currently used during classroom instruction.
 - ❖ Evidence of student’s primary disability impacting test accessibility.
 - ❖ Evidence of student’s experience level with the special accommodations requested.
 - ❖ Evidence of goals to increase, maintain or improve functional capabilities over time.

Step 4 – The CSDE sends letter of response to the DA indicating the petition has been approved or denied.

Letters include:

- Date;
- Name and address of the DTC petitioning for special accommodation;
- Student Name;
- Test Year;
- Grade;
- Test (CMT Science, CAPT Science, Smarter Balanced, etc);
- Description of disabling conditions and the impact on test accessibility; and
- Statement of approval or denial.
 - ❖ Letters of approval also include:
 - Explanation of special accommodations for each subtest;
 - Statement regarding score reporting and related judgments; and
 - Names individual (usually the District Test Coordinator) responsible for appropriate submission of materials.

SAMPLE ONLY

PETITION FOR APPROVAL OF SPECIAL DOCUMENTED ACCOMMODATIONS

Student Name _____ SASID _____

(Last, First)

Date of Birth _____ Grade _____ District _____

School _____ Date _____

Student has an: IEP ☐ Section 504 plan ☐ (If neither, stop here, student does not qualify)

Summative Assessment: Smarter Balanced ☐ CT SAT School Day ☐ CMT of CAPT Science ☐

Subject Area (select all that apply): ELA ☐ Mathematics ☐ Science ☐

Answer each the following questions in Section I and II to determine if a student may qualify for special documented accommodations.

Section I		
Guiding Questions: Respond to Each	Response	
	YES	NO/NA
1. Does the student's disability not allow the student to take the Smarter Balanced test online?		
2. Does the student's disability not allow the student to take the test online and also includes a documented print disability requiring Smarter Balanced ELA passages read to them by a trained educator?		
3. Is this a student who is Blind or Deaf-Blind without adequate braille skills or technology skills requiring ELA passages read to them by a trained educator?		
4. Is this a student who is Deaf, Hard of Hearing or Deaf-Blind requiring ELA or Math test items signed to them by a trained educator?		
5. Is this a student who is Deaf, Hard of Hearing with a Print Disability requiring ELA passages signed to them by a trained educator?		
6. Does the student's disability prevent him/her from responding on a computer or on paper?		
7. Does the student have a documented need to use specific hardware/software which is not compatible with the online testing platform?		

SAMPLE ONLY

PETITION FOR APPROVAL OF SPECIAL DOCUMENTED ACCOMMODATIONS

Student Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Grade _____
(Last, First)

SECTION II respond to each of the following:

1. Based upon responses in Section I explain how the needs of the student are currently being addressed during instruction. (use additional pages if needed)
2. Enclose a copy of the student's latest Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan which documents the use of the proposed accommodation(s) in the student's current instructional setting and for assessments.
3. Provide additional supporting documentation of the student's need for accommodation that further supports the need for the accommodation by providing evidence of conditions or characteristics described above. These may include the most recent psycho-educational, evaluation and physical therapy, speech/language, language communication plan etc.
4. List all document(s) provided.

Certification: We believe that the proposed documented accommodations are necessary in order for this student to participate in the Connecticut Summative Assessments.

Teacher Name _____
Print *Telephone Number*

Teacher Signature _____

Special Education Director Name _____
Print *Telephone Number*

Special Education Director Signature _____

District Test Coordinator Name _____
Print *Telephone Number*

District Test Coordinator Signature _____

Change Log

Change	Section	Date

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Performance Office

Ajit Gopalakrishnan
Chief Performance Officer

Abe Krisst
Bureau Chief

Joseph Amenta/Janet Stuck
Education Consultants
Special Populations